

# **NATO STANDARD**

## **AJP-3.5**

# **ALLIED JOINT DOCTRINE FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS**

**Edition A Version 1  
DECEMBER 2013**



**NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION**

**ALLIED JOINT PUBLICATION**

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**NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (NATO)**  
**NATO STANDARDIZATION AGENCY (NSA)**  
**NATO LETTER OF PROMULGATION**

17 December 2013

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Dr. Cihangir Aksit, TUR Civ  
Director NATO Standardization Agency

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## RECORD OF SPECIFIC RESERVATIONS

NATION	DETAIL OF RESERVATION
BEL	BEL does not recognize the term "direct support air task unit" (DSATU)
DNK	Where discrepancies between the criteria for declaring an Opposed Boarding, The Royal Danish Navy will adhere to the definition laid out in ATP-71.
FRA	<p>a) France expresses a reservation with regard to the French translation of the adjective "clandestine" used in AJP-3.5, for instance in the expression "clandestine operations". Reason: the adjective "clandestine" in the expression "clandestine operations" (in English) must not be translated as such in the French version of AJP-3.5. Indeed, the meaning of the adjective "clandestine" (in English) differs clearly from the meaning of the adjective "clandestin" (in French/France); it is a deceptive cognate which in French/France implies that the operation is illegal. The adjective "clandestine" (in English) will have to be rendered by "secret" or "dissimulé". In addition, in order to remove any ambiguity, the French translation of "clandestine operations" will have to be modified in the next edition of AAP 06. There should no longer be any occurrences of the words "opérations clandestines" which shall be replaced by the words "opérations secrètes" or "opérations dissimulées".</p> <p>b) France expresses a reservation with regard to the French translation of the word "task" (in English) used more than fifty times in AJP-3.5. Reason: the word "task" has no definition in AAP 06 (edition 2012 or 2013). This Anglo saxon word is far broader. In the French military language, a "tâche" (a literal translation of "task") is an action to be conducted for the completion of a mission. When AJP-3.5 will be translated, the word "task" should not be systematically rendered by "tâche". The levels "missions", "procédés d'exécution" and "tâches" will have to be differentiated.  In addition, during the next review of AAP 06, a definition of the words "task" and "tâche" will have to be given with the appropriate translations.</p>
USA	<p>(1) Use of the terms referring to "effects" and "objectives" must be consistent with higher level AJP language. Effects are created or generated to support achievement of objectives.</p> <p>(2) The term "kinetic" is inconsistent with its use in higher level AJP. Additionally, the ROE context in this AJP relates to lethality, not kinetic actions. Kinetic definition is: of or relating to or produced by motion. Targets are serviced with lethal and non-lethal means depending on the desired effects to be achieved. Non kinetic is not a word and at most can mean not in motion or not produced by motion.</p> <p>(3) There are numerous references to the commander of the joint headquarters that will direct the operations as the "operational-level</p>



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## PREFACE

1. AJP-3.5 Edition A Version 1, *Allied Joint Doctrine for Special Operations*, is written at the operational level—where campaigns and major operations are planned, conducted, and sustained—primarily for an Allied joint force and subordinate component commands.
2. It provides the overarching doctrinal guidance for conducting Allied special operations across the spectrum of conflict. It describes the characteristics, principal tasks, organization, and command and control of special operations forces (SOF), and explains how to integrate Allied SOF with conventional forces. It further provides an operational-level commander the guidance and information necessary to identify, nominate, and select missions appropriate for Allied SOF. AJP-3.5 Edition A Version 1 also summarizes support requirements necessary to conduct special operations missions.
3. Within the architecture of AJPs, AJP-3.5 Edition A Version 1 is directly subordinate to AJP-3(B), *Allied Joint Doctrine for the Conduct of Operations*, which describes the fundamentals of joint operations and provides guidance on conducting joint operations.

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# CHAPTER 1 – OVERVIEW OF ALLIED SPECIAL OPERATIONS

## 1.1. INTRODUCTION

Special operations are military activities conducted by specially designated, organized, trained, and equipped forces, manned with selected personnel, using unconventional tactics, techniques, and modes of employment. These activities may be conducted across the full range of military operations, independently or with conventional forces, to help achieve the desired end-state. Politico-military considerations may require clandestine or covert techniques and the acceptance of a degree of political or military risk not associated with operations by conventional forces. Special Operations deliver strategic or operational-level results or are executed where significant political risk exists.

## 1.2. SPECIAL OPERATIONS CHARACTERISTICS

- a. Special operations are, by nature, joint. Special operations forces (SOF) are organized in a joint manner with aviation, maritime, and land units from the troop contributing nations (TCNs), constituting a mission-specific special operations component command (SOCC), with a joint staff to plan and direct special operations.
- b. NATO SOF are strategic assets to be employed to help achieve strategic- and specified operational-level objectives. SOF are commanded through a SOCC which exists alongside land, air, or maritime component commands.
- c. NATO will normally conduct special operations in a joint operations area (JOA) with other air, land, and maritime forces. It is in this context that an operational-level commander creates the greatest synergistic effect with unity of command, operational-level integration of forces, and the utilization of NATO's supported/supporting relationship principle.
- d. Special operations are normally conducted in uncertain, hostile, or politically sensitive environments to create effects that support achievement of strategic-operational comprehensive objectives. These operations may be conducted using clandestine or covert capabilities/techniques and require mature and highly-trained operators.
- e. Special operations can be conducted independently or in conjunction with operations by conventional forces and may include combined and interagency operations by, with, or through indigenous or surrogate forces.
- f. Special operations differ from conventional operations in the degree of political risk, operational techniques, modes of employment, dependence on

detailed operational intelligence (INTEL), and use of indigenous assets. SOF personnel undergo a careful selection process and mission-specific training beyond basic military skills to achieve entry-level special operations skills. SOF organizational structures tend to be populated by mature and seasoned personnel, many of whom maintain high levels of competency in more than one military specialty.

- g. Special operations are an integral part of Allied campaigns. While special operations can be conducted unilaterally in support of specific Allied objectives, the majority of special operations are designed and conducted to enhance the likelihood of success of the overall campaign which is usually done by a supporting SOF campaign. Special operations may complement—but must not compete with, nor be a substitute for—conventional operations.
- h. The successful conduct of special operations relies on individual and small unit proficiency in a multitude of specialized, often unconventional operational skills applied with adaptability, improvisation, innovation, and self-reliance. The small size, unique capabilities, and self-sufficiency (for limited periods of time) of SOF units provide the Alliance with additional options for a military response that may not entail the risk of escalation normally associated with employment of inherently larger or more visible conventional forces.
- i. Special operations can be conducted directly against an adversary by forces acting in a single engagement, such as a raid against a critical node, or indirectly, for example, by organizing, training, and supporting an indigenous force through military assistance (MA). In most instances, the results are normally highly efficient, compared to the size of the units involved.

### **1.3. SPECIAL OPERATIONS AND THE SPECTRUM OF CONFLICT**

Special operations may be conducted across the spectrum of conflict (or range of military operations) as part of Article 5 collective defence or non-Article 5 crisis response operations (NA5CROs) to fulfil NATO's three essential core tasks (collective defence, crisis management, and cooperative security). Special operations are conducted not only during major combat operations, stability operations, and peace support operations as part of the NATO Crisis Response System, but also for peacetime engagement, enhancing mutual cooperation. Special operations missions may include a suitable combination or all of the principal tasks of MA, Special Reconnaissance (SR), or Direct Action (DA)<sup>1</sup> depending on the circumstances of each operation. While special operations missions may range from small unilateral actions to large-scale activities of a combined and joint

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<sup>1</sup> See paragraph 2.2.

nature, they are tailored to contribute to the accomplishment of the defined political and strategic objectives (Figure 1).

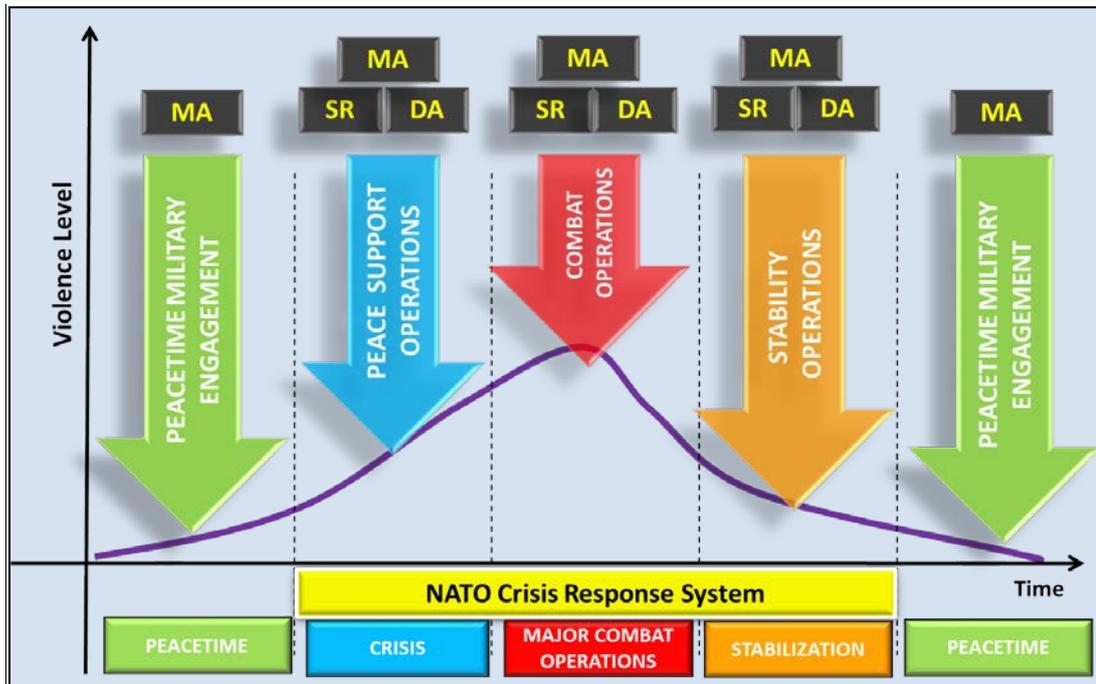


Figure 1. Special Operations and the Spectrum of Conflict (Generic Example)

## 1.4. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMON ATTRIBUTES

### 1.4.1 Tempo

High tempo is normally essential to SOF's ability to conduct special operations. Rapid execution of a mission allows SOF to mass precisely tailored combat power at the critical place and time, accomplish the mission, withdraw before the adversary can react, and then attack again. A high tempo offsets small numbers and limited firepower by reducing the adversary's ability to bring its main strength to bear on committed SOF. At the same time, a high tempo provides security through speed, allowing acceptance of a higher degree of risk than would be otherwise possible.

### 1.4.2 Pre-emption

SOF may pre-empt an adversary by neutralizing its capabilities before a fight—either independently or in support of conventional forces. The covert capabilities for pre-emption may prevent initiation or escalation to a larger conflict. SOF do this through MA efforts to build indigenous defence and INTEL capabilities and DA on an adversary's critical operational or strategic targets. Deployed SOF can often provide the strategic- or

operational-level commander with the understanding and awareness regarding local population perspectives, intentions, and other information.

### **1.4.3 Disruption**

Special operations disrupt an adversary through attacks against its critical capabilities that include decisive points or decisive conditions that may affect the centres of gravity. This may preclude an adversary from conducting successful countermoves.

### **1.4.4 Deception**

Special operations can provide the operational-level commander multiple means to attack an adversary's will to resist. SOF can create the impression that there are too many forces for the adversary to counter effectively. With no safe areas, and adversary forces subject to attack anywhere at any time, an adversary's morale can be significantly weakened.

### **1.4.5 Initiative**

SOF provides commanders with the ability to make independent, time-critical decisions using all available information and guidance presented in higher headquarters (HQ) commander's intent.

## **1.5. EMPLOYMENT OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES**

Although SOF often use sophisticated and unique methods and equipment, the key to success lies with the individual special operator. Therefore it is essential that the plans, orders, and procedures that drive their employment are clear and direct so that the commander's intent is understood even for complex operations. For optimal employment of SOF, a fundamental understanding of the following, regarding special operations, is essential:

### **1.5.1. Early Presence**

While a crisis is developing, SOF may be deployed to establish an early forward presence and initiate military and civilian liaison, conduct area assessments, provide an early command and control (C2) capability, or advise friendly forces. This provides the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) as the Strategic Commander of Allied Command Operations (ACO) and the operational-level commander with an increased understanding of a developing crisis and, if required, helps set the conditions for the initial entry of joint forces.

### **1.5.2. High Value Objectives**

Special operations should be directed at the accomplishment of high value, critical objectives that may entail high risk but also have a high pay-off value. The numbers of SOF are limited and they cannot rapidly expand. They should not, therefore, be employed like conventional forces that rely on manoeuvre and mass. SOF concentrate their combat power directly and indirectly, at decisive times and places. Care must be taken not to fragment the efforts of SOF against targets that are attractive but perhaps more suited to other forces. SOF should be assigned tasks that lead directly to the accomplishment of military-strategic and operational-level objectives.

### **1.5.3. Access to Intelligence**

Special operations are normally planned in considerable detail, and SOF rely on accurate, current INTEL to ensure that plans meet precisely the situation in the intended target area. Access to all available timely, detailed, tailored, and fused all-source INTEL is essential for a successful operation.

### **1.5.4. Clear Command and Control Relationships**

Because of the nature of special operations, a clear and short chain of command is essential. It is imperative that SOF C2 be closely integrated with the C2 of the joint force, through appropriate liaison and communication and information systems (CIS) interfaces.

### **1.5.5. Timely Decision-making**

ACO and the operational-level commander maintain SOF expertise in their special advisor groups<sup>2</sup> to facilitate timely decision-making and take the lead in:

- a. Advising the commander and staff on all issues pertaining to SOF.
- b. Coordinating and liaising NATO SOF and national SOF structures.
- c. Nesting and synchronizing SOF across the full spectrum in their area of interest.
- d. Integrating Special Operations Planning and Liaison Elements (SOPLEs) when they are attached to the operational-level headquarters.

### **1.5.6. Operations Security (OPSEC)**

Security is paramount in special operations because it prevents the adversary from gaining essential information about the type, techniques, strength, and capabilities of the forces participating in the operation. Planning staffs are kept small. However, SOF planning should be integrated with the operational-level commander's overall campaign to ensure

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<sup>2</sup> MC 437/2, Special Operations Policy, 2011

mutual support. Information should be shared by all concerned with the planning of operations. INTEL, counterintelligence, and information operations aspects should all be integrated throughout the planning and execution of special operations to enhance security and achieve surprise.

## **1.6. SPECIAL OPERATIONS OPERATIONAL MISSION CRITERIA**

The following criteria should be used when evaluating SOF employment:

### **1.6.1. Permissible**

The mission must be in line with the mandate and legal framework for the operation, including implemented rules of engagement (ROEs). The objectives set have to be achievable within the legal authorities given. If the necessary ROEs have not been implemented, they have to be requested.

### **1.6.2. Appropriate**

Is the mission suitable for SOF capabilities, and does it accord fully with the operational-level commander's objectives? Could another asset be used? The mission must have a unique aspect that requires the special skills and capabilities of SOF, and which renders the mission unsuitable (or less suitable) for action by other assets.

### **1.6.3. Feasible**

If the mission is appropriate, can it feasibly be accomplished by the SOF assets available? Does the SOF element have the appropriate training, skills, planning, and rehearsal time, as well as the required cultural understanding?

### **1.6.4. Sustainable**

Are the resources adequate? Is the INTEL sufficient? Is there adequate insertion, logistic sustainability on the ground, extraction, survivability, and CIS support? Even if the target is appropriate, feasible, and vulnerable to SOF, a lack of dedicated support resources may prevent the execution of a special operation.

### **1.6.5. Justifiable**

Does the expected outcome justify the risk? Commanders should recognize the high value and limited resources of SOF and ensure that the benefits of successful task execution are measurable and in balance with the risks inherent in the task. Assessment of risk must take into account not only the potential for loss of SOF units and equipment, but also the risk of adverse effects on Alliance interests should the mission fail.

## **CHAPTER 2 – ALLIED SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES PRINCIPAL TASKS**

### **2.1. INTRODUCTION**

SOF offer the Alliance an additional and unique capability to achieve objectives and perform tasks to create strategic- and/or operational-level effects that no other forces in NATO are able to conduct. If, however, they perform tasks that may be conducted by other Alliance forces, they do so with a unique set of conditions and standards.

### **2.2. PRINCIPAL TASKS OF ALLIED SOF**

In the context of Allied joint operations, SOF conduct three principal tasks: MA, SR, and DA.

#### **2.2.1. MILITARY ASSISTANCE**

MA is a broad category of measures and activities that support and influence critical friendly assets through organizing training, advising, mentoring, or the conduct of combined operations. The range of MA includes, but is not limited to, capability building of friendly security forces, engagement with local, regional, and national leadership or organizations, and civic actions supporting and influencing the local population. SOF conduct MA within their field of expertise. More specifically, MA activities may include:

##### **2.2.1.1. Training**

These are activities that train designated individuals and units in tactical employment, sustainment, and integration of land, air, and maritime skills, provide assistance to designated leaders, and provide training on tactics, techniques, and procedures, thus enabling a nation to develop individual, leader, and organizational skills.

##### **2.2.1.2. Advising**

These are activities that improve the performance of designated actors by providing active participation and expertise to achieve strategic or operational objectives.

##### **2.2.1.3. Mentoring/Partnering**

These are activities conducted by small teams of subject matter experts who are tasked to work closely with designated personnel and provide direction and guidance which may concern the conduct of military or security operations.

## **2.2.2. SPECIAL RECONNAISSANCE**

SR is conducted by SOF to support the collection of a commander's Priority Intelligence Requirements (PIRs) by employing unique capabilities or Joint Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (JISR) assets. As part of the Allied theatre INTEL collection process, SR provides specific, well-defined, and possibly time-sensitive information of strategic or operational significance. It may complement other collection methods where constraints are imposed by weather, terrain-masking, hostile countermeasures, or other systems' availability. SR places persistent "eyes on target" in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive territory. SOF can provide timely information by using their judgment and initiative in a way that technical JISR cannot. SOF may conduct these tasks separately, supported by, in conjunction with, or in support of other component commands. They may use advanced reconnaissance and surveillance techniques, JISR assets and equipment, and collection methods, sometimes augmented by the employment of indigenous assets. Activities within SR can include:

### **2.2.2.1. Environmental Reconnaissance**

These are operations conducted to collect and report critical aspects of the environment, including hydrographical, geological, geographical, meteorological, and oceanographic information.

### **2.2.2.2. Threat Assessment**

Threat assessments should, whenever possible, be based on accurate and timely INTEL. SR can assist the different levels of command in determining which elements of an adversary force pose a threat to operations and the friendly force, what are the adversary's capabilities for mounting attacks, what methods are likely to be employed in conducting these operations, and which friendly targets are likely to be attacked. SR also provides the option to observe a target and interpret the behaviour of population and opposing forces over an extended time.

### **2.2.2.3. Target Assessment**

These are operations conducted to detect, identify, locate, and assess a target to determine the most effective employment of force for the required course of action. This type of operation might also include the assessment of the potential effects (to include collateral damage) of engaging the target.

### **2.2.2.4. Post-Strike Reconnaissance**

These operations are undertaken for the purpose of gathering information for battle damage assessment and munitions effects assessment to measure results of an attack.

### **2.2.3. DIRECT ACTION**

DA is a precise offensive operation conducted by SOF which is limited in scope and duration in order to seize, destroy, disrupt, capture, exploit, recover, or damage high value or high pay-off targets. DA differs from conventional offensive actions in the level of risk, techniques employed, and the degree of precision utilized to create a specific effect, and usually incorporates a planned withdrawal from the immediate objective area. DA is focused on specific, well-defined targets of strategic and operational significance, or in the conduct of decisive tactical operations. SOF may conduct DA independently, with support from conventional forces, or in support of conventional forces. Activities within DA can include:

#### **2.2.3.1. Raids, Ambushes, and Assaults**

These operations are designed to achieve specific, well-defined, and often time-sensitive results. They are sometimes beyond the effective strike capabilities of conventional force elements. Such operations typically involve attacking critical targets; interdicting of lines of communications or other target systems; capturing designated personnel or materiel; or seizing, destroying, or neutralizing adversary facilities or capabilities.

#### **2.2.3.2. Terminal Guidance Operations**

These are actions to identify and report the precise location of targets, and to allow non-organic stand-off platforms to use their ordnance to effectively engage them. This includes different kinds of communication that provides approaching aircraft or weapons additional information regarding a specific location or target.

#### **2.2.3.3. Recovery Operations**

These are operations conducted to search for, locate, identify, rescue, and return personnel, sensitive equipment, or items critical to Alliance security from contested or adversary controlled areas. Special operations recovery missions are characterized by detailed planning, rehearsal, and thorough INTEL analysis. These operations employ unconventional tactics and techniques, discreet search, and the frequent use of ground combat elements.

#### **2.2.3.4. Precision Destruction Operations**

These are operations in which the avoidance of any collateral damage is given as an operational objective besides the destruction of the target. SOF use highly sophisticated weapons or timed detonation of specific amounts of explosives placed in exact locations to accomplish mission objectives. Precision destruction operations can be conducted against targets where precision-guided munitions cannot guarantee first strike success or when the contents of a facility must be destroyed without damage to that facility.

### **2.2.3.5. Opposed Boarding Operations<sup>3</sup>**

These are DA during maritime interdiction operations, to assault and take control of a maritime vessel or platform. The threat level for the boarding party is anticipated as very high.

## **2.3. SOF ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE ALLIED JOINT OPERATIONS**

SOF principal tasks are applied to support—but are not limited to—the activities below:

### **2.3.1. Counter-insurgency (COIN)<sup>4</sup>**

SOF can effectively complement the overarching application of diplomatic, economic, military, and information Alliances' instruments of power, applied in a COIN role. When preparing for COIN, SOF can provide area assessments and an early command, control, and communications capability. During COIN, SOF could conduct MA, SR, DA, or a suitable combination of these principal tasks, to support Allied joint operations in order to accomplish the defined political and strategic objectives. The success of these operations can be enhanced by the conduct of technical exploitation operations (TEO).

### **2.3.2. Counterterrorism (CT)<sup>5</sup>**

CT is an overarching umbrella of offensive measures designed to reduce the vulnerability of Allied interests, their forces, individuals, and property to terrorism, to include counter-force activities and containment by military force and civil agencies. SOF should be utilized when there is high risk, a need for special capabilities, or a requirement to conduct covert or clandestine operations. These forces can operate in concert with other joint force efforts or operate independently by conducting DA (while minimizing collateral damage), SR, or MA. The success of these operations can be enhanced by the conduct of TEO.

### **2.3.3. Countering Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) as well as Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) Materials**

SOF are a significant part of Allied capabilities to support NATO's counter proliferation and trafficking objectives related to WMD and CBRN related materials, including the ability to conduct, with other specialized elements, WMD disablement missions. WMD disablement is generally described as operations whose aim is to systematically locate, secure, characterize, eliminate, or dispose WMD, CBRN weapons, CBRN devices and CBRN materials, and/or a potential adversary's capability to research, develop, test, produce,

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<sup>3</sup> Opposed Boarding Operations are described in ATP-71, Allied Maritime Interdiction Operations.

<sup>4</sup> AJP 3.4.4, Allied Joint Doctrine for Counterinsurgency.

<sup>5</sup> C-M(2012)00271, NATO's Policy Guidelines on Counter-Terrorism.

stockpile, deploy, or employ such weapons, devices, and materials. Activities designed to conduct WMD disablement missions are inherently complex and generally necessitate the employment of specially trained and equipped personnel. In the context of a NATO operation, NATO SOF involvement in the WMD disablement missions will generally be deferred to the members of the Alliance possessing these specialized capabilities. In extremis, however, where specialized forces cannot be brought in sufficient time to prevent the employment of WMD and/or CBRN materials, or their immediate interdiction is required, the authority to utilize other NATO forces, to include NATO SOF, to capture, deter, secure, or assist in WMD disablement mission, might be sought.

#### **2.3.4. Hostage Release Operation (HRO)**

NATO SOF may be involved in an HRO, under certain circumstances. Further details about HRO are discussed in MC 437/2.

#### **2.3.5. Faction Liaison**

In order to gain a better understanding of the operating environment, situational awareness, and to collect information, SOF can liaise with many factions in a Joint Operational Area (JOA). The information available at the different host actors is often vital in support of full spectrum special operations. The assignment of capable liaison officers can be especially relevant in supporting MA tasks. They are important for INTEL partnering/mentoring which should improve the information collection in remote areas in using indigenous elements. The information has to be integrated in the INTEL process/cycle in order to develop joint INTEL preparation of the battle space, disseminate assessments and reports, and support the operations planning process.

### **2.4. SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES AIR AND MARITIME OPERATIONS**

While it is comprehensible that special operations are usually land heavy, some additional peculiarities are described below:

#### **2.4.1. SOF Air Operations**

##### **2.4.1.1. General**

Special operations air forces conduct and support each of the SOF principal tasks. In MA, their primary mission is to build friendly nation air capabilities by employing air advisors. In SR, their primary mission is conducting intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance using aerial platforms. The primary mission for DA is providing enhanced air transport to land and maritime SOF, but may also provide specialized ground attack air platforms not available in the conventional forces. Special air operations, like land and maritime special operations, are not defined only by the equipment utilized, but rather by the unconventional and innovative ways that aircrews employ whatever they have at their disposal.

#### **2.4.1.2. SOF Air Missions**

SOF air operations conduct and support each of the principal tasks assigned to NATO SOF. The primary mission of special operations air forces is enhanced air mobility—specialized air transport activities via fixed-wing, rotary-wing, or tilt-rotor aircraft. Other special air warfare activities may include air to land integration (ALI), close air support (CAS), close combat attack (CCA), air-to-air refuelling (AAR), personnel recovery (PR), and medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) for special operations air, land, and maritime forces.

#### **2.4.1.3. Other Air Missions in Direct Support of SOF**

Additional aircraft offered by a TCN to a NATO operation in a direct support role, but not certified as special operations qualified, may be accepted and utilized to augment the airlift, fire support, and JISR capabilities of NATO SOF. These resources offer an important additional capability that helps the NATO SOF commander address the range of threats, environments, and requirements.

#### **2.4.1.4. SOF Air Operations Joint Air Tasking Cycle Integration**

SOF air operations will be integrated into the joint air tasking cycle through coordination with the air component staff. All SOF operations will be de-conflicted from operations of conventional forces and integrated into the joint air task cycle through coordination with the air component staff. All requests for additional air support from non-SOF resources, such as AT, CAS, electronic warfare, AAR, and JISR platforms, as a result of mission analysis and planning, will be coordinated with the conventional force through specific liaison elements.

### **2.4.2. SOF Maritime Operations<sup>6</sup>**

Maritime SOF tasks include any of the principal SOF tasks, provided that the SOF units conducting those tasks are similarly organised as ground SOF units. Maritime SOF primarily conduct operations in the coastal, riverine, and maritime environments. They utilize small, flexible, mobile units operating under, on, and from the sea. These operations are characterized by stealth, speed, and precise application of force. They may be focused on, but not restricted to, the following activities:

- a. Insertion/extraction by sea.
- b. Discreet beach reconnaissance (hydrographic survey) in advance of an amphibious operation.
- c. Discreet assault route preparation in advance of an amphibious operation.

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<sup>6</sup> Maritime SOF can conduct and support at least level 1 land SOF principal tasks, described in Annex A.

- d. Recovery or protection of ships and maritime oil installations.
- e. Coastal reconnaissance.
- f. Other activities performed in support of an amphibious operation<sup>7</sup> or any other maritime operation

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<sup>7</sup> ATP-8(B), Doctrine for Amphibious Operations.

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## **CHAPTER 3 – ORGANIZATION AND COMMAND AND CONTROL OF ALLIED SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES**

### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

NATO SOF organization may differ from those that exist at the national levels. Additionally, SOF C2 relationships should be clearly specified in order to facilitate the planning process as well as the conduct of special operations<sup>8</sup>.

### **3.2. DIRECTOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS (DSO)**

Dual-hatted as the commander of the NATO Special Operations Headquarters (NSHQ), the Director Special Operations is ACO/SACEUR's link to the NSHQ by providing the organization strategic direction and guidance in order to help accomplish SACEUR's strategic objectives.

### **3.3. NATO SPECIAL OPERATIONS HEADQUARTERS**

The NSHQ is a unique Allied SOF organization which is collocated at SHAPE. It serves as the primary point of development, direction, and coordination for NATO special operations-related activities in order to optimize the employment of SOF and provides special operations expertise to SACEUR and NATO Command Structure and NATO Force Structure HQs through timely and effective advice on the planning, manning, and conduct of special operations. It defines and promotes SOF interoperability through training, exercises, and evaluation programmes, provides NATO SOF enablers, and retains an organic command, control, communications, computers, and INTEL capability in the support and the employment of SOF in NATO operations. When directed by SACEUR, the NSHQ can provide an initial core of an operational SOCC.

### **3.4. ALLIED SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCE STRUCTURE**

#### **3.4.1. Special Operations Component Command<sup>9</sup>**

The SOCC is a multinational or national joint component command formed around a framework nation (FN). SOCCs are non-standing HQs in the NATO Force Structure that are tailored for each operation according to the number of Special Operations Task Groups (SOTGs) assigned and the degree of C2 required. A SOTG is generic and can

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<sup>8</sup> The full listing of requisite capabilities that NATO requires from SOF is delineated in the Bi-SC Agreed Capability Codes and Capability Statements.

<sup>9</sup> Depending upon the capabilities required, a SOCC can be formed around a SOCC Framework or SOCC Framework Minus. Either case requires a SOF Framework Nation (see the Bi-SC Agreed Capability Codes and Capability Statements).

refer to a special operations land task group (SOLTG) or a special operations maritime task group (SOMTG). The FN forms the nucleus of the SOCC by providing, as a minimum, the commander, key staff personnel, and command and control information systems (C2ISs) down to SOTG level and base life support functions. The FN will also be expected to coordinate the combat service support (CSS) functions for the component and is expected to provide at least one SOTG and a tactical airlift capability to effect SOF insertion/infiltration and extraction/exfiltration. Under certain circumstances, NATO-enabled C2IS may be provided to the SOCC in order to facilitate, augment, or replace reliance upon the FN's organic C2IS. Nations providing SOTGs should provide staff officers/non-commissioned officers to the SOCC, commensurate with the number of SOTGs contributed. Other NATO nations can contribute personnel to the SOCC contingent upon approval from the respective FN. The SOCC commander employs and controls SOF and can act as a supported or supporting commander as directed by the operational-level commander. A SOCC is comprised of a combination of command and liaison elements, and force elements that are described in the following paragraphs. See Figure 2 for a notional SOCC organization.

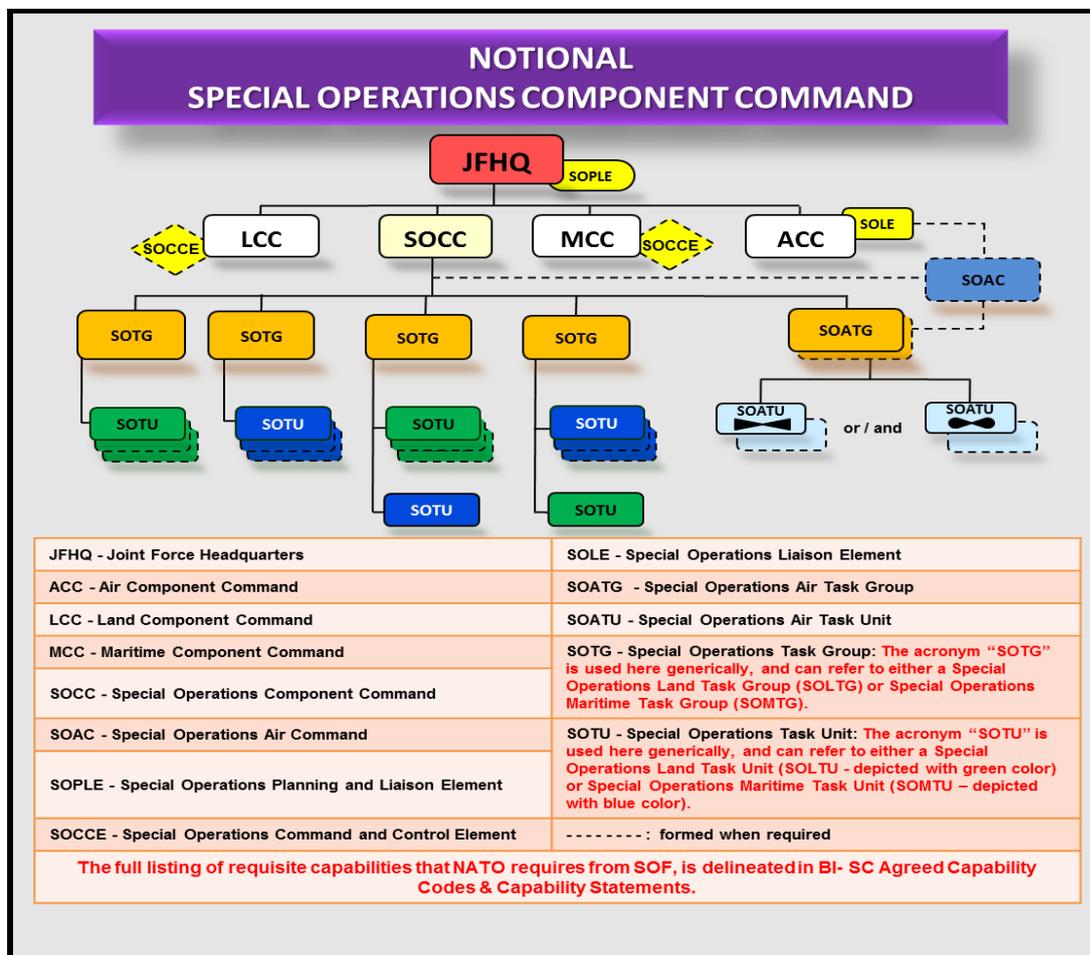


Figure 2. Notional Special Operations Component Command Organization

### 3.4.2. SOCC Commander

- a. The SOCC commander is responsible to the operational-level commander for making recommendations on the proper employment of SOF and additional assets assigned, attached, or made available for tasking. The SOCC commander is also responsible for planning and coordinating special operations within a SOF campaign plan, and is granted the authority necessary to accomplish such missions as may be assigned by the operational-level commander.
- b. A special operations command structure should be designated as early as possible, participate in the overall campaign planning, develop a SOF campaign within, and assume the task of forming and leading the SOCC for the duration of an operation. Besides the required capabilities to qualify a nation as a FN, this nation should take the lead in:
  - (1) Using appropriate planning and liaison elements to contribute to the planning process.
  - (2) Preparing the SOF operation plan/support plan.
  - (3) Advising on SOF requirements.
  - (4) Coordinating SOF support.
  - (5) Participating in the joint targeting process.
  - (6) Establishing and maintaining liaison with the appropriate operational and tactical levels and NATO HQs.
  - (7) Coordinating basic support infrastructure.

### 3.4.3. Special Operations Air Command (SOAC)

- a. The SOCC commander may establish a SOAC to plan, task, and control the joint special air operations and subordinate air groups and units. An SOAC may also be required in the case of a large-scale, SOF-only operation where it must perform as the air component for all supporting (SOF and conventional) air missions. OPCOM of these specialized air assets normally remains with the contributing nation, but tactical control (TACON) is usually transferred to the SOCC commander. The SOAC may provide excess SOF sorties to the air component only by exception and upon approval of the SOCC commander. The SOAC will normally be formed around the commander and staff of the air HQ from the nation providing the preponderance of SOF aircraft. The SOAC will, ideally, collocate with the SOCC HQ but should have the capability to

operate from a separate location. When a SOCC requires more than two SOATGs, the establishment of an SOAC is the preferred method for commanding and controlling SOF aviation assets.

- b. Due to their limited availability, NATO SOF air assets need to be allocated to best support SOF operations. This allocation is based on such factors as mission requirements, priorities, acceptable risk, national caveats, interoperability, and the commander's guidance, while exploiting the different capabilities of air assets and minimizing the effects of their limitations.

#### 3.4.4. Special Operations Task Group (SOTG)<sup>10 11</sup>

- a. A SOTG is a self-sustaining, national grouping of land and/or maritime SOF, in principle generated from a single nation.
- b. **Combined SOTG.** When establishing a combined SOTG, a single commander will be designated. A combined SOTG requires appropriate pre-deployment combined training. Multinationality on the task unit level is not recommended.

#### 3.4.5. Special Operations Air Task Group (SOATG)<sup>12</sup>

A SOATG is national or multinational functional grouping of air assets assigned to a SOCC, under a single C2 structure. SOATGs are composed of Special Operations Air Task Units (SOATUs) and Direct Support Air Task Units (DSATUs)<sup>13</sup> which may be of differing levels of capabilities and aircraft. A SOATG normally includes staff officers fulfilling the duties of a J-staff, from J-1 to J-6 at the minimum. If no SOAC is present, the SOATG must be prepared to fulfil the requirements normally accomplished by the SOAC.

<sup>10</sup> The acronym "SOTG" is used here generically, and can refer to either a Special Operations Land Task Group (SOLTG) or Special Operations Maritime Task Group (SOMTG).

<sup>11</sup> A SOTG (land and maritime) must be able to provide minimum capabilities (level 1) to conduct MA, SR, and DA in order to be able to create appropriate SOF effects in support of the joint campaign. The capability levels, also used to describe the Bi-SC Minimum Capability Requirements, are shown in Annex A.

<sup>12</sup> Like SOTG (land and maritime), a SOATG must be able to provide minimum capabilities (level 1) to conduct its missions. The capability levels, also used to describe the Bi-SC Minimum Capability Requirements, are shown in Annex A.

<sup>13</sup> Refer to the Bi-SC Agreed Capabilities Codes and Statements.

### **3.4.6. Special Operations Task Unit (SOTU)<sup>14</sup>**

A SOTU is the lowest level of a SOF tactical-level combat element that deploys by air, land, or sea and is able to conduct MA, SR, or DA. A SOTU, depending on actual strength, may be capable of split-team operations.

### **3.4.7. Special Operations Air Task Unit<sup>15</sup>**

The SOATU is the lowest level of combat air support element that deploys to support the SOTUs. A SOATU is comprised of special operations aviation forces and may include special operations air-land integration elements. A SOATU is normally composed of fixed-wing or rotary-wing/tilt-rotor aircraft, a logistics and maintenance element, and a command element.

### **3.4.8. Special Operations Command and Liaison Elements**

Two-way liaison is an essential element in the coordination of special operations. It is vital for coordination, critical information sharing, and understanding of SOCC/ SOF capabilities. The SOCC commander dispatches liaison elements with appropriate communications means to other HQs as necessary. Conversely, the SOCC commander may receive liaison elements from other commands or HQs, particularly in the event of tactical-level integrated or converging operations between SOF and conventional forces, or when there is a supported/supporting relationship between the SOCC and another component command. Additionally, a SOCC can dispatch other liaison elements as required, as well as the NSHQ can provide planning and liaison elements on request of an operational level commander. The size, duration of employment, and scope of duties of these liaison elements will vary according to their assigned functions.

#### **3.4.8.1. Special Operations Planning and Liaison Element**

A SOPLE is an element dispatched from the SOCC commander to an operational HQ (e.g. JFHQ) during crisis response planning and execution. The SOPLE, in close coordination with the SOF advisor (SOFAD), contributes to the planning, refinement, and execution process of the joint level, synchronizing and integrating the SOF portion into the campaign plan. SOPLE and SOFAD collaboration will result in full integration of special operations throughout the campaign and the creation of nested SOF effects in support of the operational-level commander.

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<sup>14</sup> The acronym "SOTU" is used here generically, and can refer to either a Special Operations Land Task Unit (SOLTU) or Special Operations Maritime Task Unit (SOMTU). The full listing of requisite capabilities that NATO requires from these elements is shown in Annex A and Bi-SC Agreed Capabilities Codes and Statements.

<sup>15</sup> The full listing of requisite capabilities that NATO requires from a SOATU is described in Annex A and Bi-SC Agreed Capabilities Codes and Statements.

### **3.4.8.2. Special Operations Command and Control Element (SOCCE)**

When SOF operate directly in the area of operations (AOO) of conventional forces, or when the likelihood of integrated or converging operations with conventional forces is probable in a JOA, the SOCC commander may establish a SOCCE to synchronize, de-conflict, and coordinate operations with conventional forces. The SOCCE will normally collocate with the appropriate-level conventional force HQ (maritime or land). The SOCCE is a C2 node for SOF elements operating in an AOO of conventional forces (land or maritime).

### **3.4.8.3. Special Operations Liaison Element (SOLE)**

The SOLE is a liaison team provided by the SOCC commander to the appropriate component air C2 organization. The SOLE coordinates, de-conflicts, and integrates SOF air, surface, and subsurface operations with conventional air operations. Also, the SOLE ensures that special operations are appropriately represented in the various meetings, working groups, boards, teams, and cells that comprise the working routine of an air operations centre.

## **3.5. COMMAND AND CONTROL AND INTELLIGENCE SHARING OF ALLIED SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES**

### **3.5.1. Command and Control.**

In NATO, nations retain full command and OPCOM of their SOTGs. Nations will transfer OPCON of their SOTGs through SACEUR to the highest operational level commander, normally a JFHQ commander, for designated NATO operations. OPCON is normally then delegated to the SOCC commander. The SOCC commander normally will retain OPCON of the assigned SOTGs, but may delegate TACON of tactical units for limited periods or specific missions. The SOCC commander reports to the highest appropriate operational-level commander, as directed by SACEUR. In the event of activation of a joint task force headquarters, the SOCC will be placed under OPCON of the affected JFHQ. To establish coherent C2 and maintain a common operational picture, all nations contributing SOF to the SOCC should ensure their units comply with SOCC geospatial tracking requirements, to include utilization of force trackers, if available. SOF C2IS should be executed within the SOF chain of command. In all cases, commanders exercising command authority over SOF should:

- a. Provide a clear and unambiguous chain of command.
- b. Provide sufficient staff experience and expertise to plan, conduct, and support the operations.
- c. Integrate SOF in the planning process.

- d. Match unit capabilities with mission requirements.

### **3.5.2. SOF Intelligence Sharing**

The NATO Battlefield Information Collection and Exploitation System (BICES) Group Executive and deployed National Intelligence Cells provide nations with the means to share their INTEL products with NATO commands and each other in a more timely fashion. This has been further improved by the establishment of the NATO Intelligence Fusion Centre (NIFC) which provides actionable, network enabled, timely, and accurate distribution of military INTEL and information at the strategic and operational levels. Furthermore, the Special Operations Intelligence Branch (SOIB) is collocated and works in close coordination with the NIFC, and provides SOF with INTEL products, as well as forms the core of the deployed SOCC J2 all-source cell (ASC).

### **3.6. CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATING ALLIED SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES**

- a. Nations whose SOF meet the following criteria may be designated a NATO SOF TCN:
  - (1) Have SOTGs that are composed of:
    - (a) A HQ consisting of the J-1 through J-6 staff functions.
    - (b) Subordinate SOTUs.
    - (c) Combat Support (CS) units.
    - (d) CSS elements.
  - (2) Conduct MA, SR, and DA across the spectrum of conflict.
  - (3) Conduct infiltration/exfiltration within an operational area, ideally utilizing organic transportation assets.
  - (4) Conduct intra-SOTG communications that have a low probability of detection.
  - (5) Conduct CS and CSS functions to SOTGs in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive areas.
  - (6) Provide C2 and INTEL to deployed elements.
  - (7) Conduct mission planning.
  - (8) Operate as part of a SOCC.

- (9) Conduct evasion and escape.
  - (10) Deploy rapidly in accordance with established deployment timelines.
  - (11) Conduct activities independently or in conjunction with conventional forces.
  - (12) Conduct overt, covert, or clandestine operations.
  - (13) Provide protection for own forces.
- b. Those nations who demonstrate the ability to fulfil the criteria below may be a SOF FN:
- (1) Deploy and establish a SOCC HQ that can command and control a certain number of assigned SOTGs/SOATGs, depending on the size of the operation<sup>16</sup>.
  - (2) Conduct NATO J-1 through J-8 staff and special staff functions.
  - (3) Command and control SOF aviation.
  - (4) Provide the SOCC a tactical-level SOF fixed-/rotary-wing or tilt-rotor lift capability.
  - (5) Conduct advanced crisis response and time-sensitive operations planning.
  - (6) Develop operational INTEL and integrate SOF JISR platforms, sensors, and human intelligence into theatre-level collection plans.
  - (7) Develop and provide OPSEC measures, to include restrictive procedures involving sensitive or compartmented SOF operations.
  - (8) Operate, manage, and maintain NATO operational-level C2IS down to SOTG level.
  - (9) Provide protection for the SOCC HQ, as required.
  - (10) Be prepared to deploy appropriate planning and liaison elements to operational HQs and other component commands beginning at the initiation and orientation phases of NATO operations.

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<sup>16</sup> Refer to the Minimum Capabilities Requirements 2011.

- (11) Be prepared to coordinate CSS functions for subordinate SOTGs.
- c. The SOF standards as well as the evaluation criteria are discussed thoroughly in ACO Forces Standards Volumes X and XI, respectively.

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## **CHAPTER 4 – INTEGRATING ALLIED SPECIAL OPERATIONS AND CONVENTIONAL FORCES**

### **4.1. INTRODUCTION**

Conventional force operations are characterized by optimum firepower, robust sustainment, extensive C2 capabilities, and relatively large numbers of personnel. SOF operations are characterized by small units of specially trained and selected personnel that conduct high-risk missions in hostile, denied, and politically sensitive environments. While there may be challenges when conventional forces and SOF operate together, there are also great opportunities for the operational-level commander to exploit. Integrating conventional forces with SOF not only creates unique capabilities but may be necessary to achieve objectives not otherwise attainable. Integration and interoperability enable the operational-level commander to take advantage of conventional force and SOF core competencies and systems. Properly integrating conventional forces into SOF actions through effective coordination and liaison can produce a greater effect at a higher tempo with less potential for fratricide than if operating separately.

### **4.2. EMPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

- a. In general, supporting/supported relationships provide the best framework for integrated conventional force/SOF operations. At the component level, this relationship allows the supported commander to set requirements and allows the supporting commander the flexibility to determine methods and tactics. The degree, type, and priority of support must be established.
- b. Support relationships require a clear definition of relationship parameters by the higher commander.
- c. Mission approval authority at the lowest possible level increases timeliness of support and flexibility. Supporting units must be included early in the supported unit planning process to ensure proper use and allow for full integration into the operation.

### **4.3. OPERATIONAL AREA GEOMETRY**

#### **4.3.1. Joint Special Operations Area (JSOA)**

The operational-level commander may establish a JSOA, which is an operational area of land and/or sea, and airspace assigned by an operational-level commander to the SOCC commander to conduct special operations activities. Operational-level commanders may use a JSOA to delineate and facilitate simultaneous use of conventional forces and SOF in the same general operational area. When a JSOA is designated, the SOCC commander

is the supported commander within the designated JSOA. Establishment of a designated JSOA for SOF to conduct unilateral operations assists in controlling of special operations and the prevention of fratricide.

#### **4.3.2. Operating in an Area of Operations Assigned to Another Commander**

When operating within another commander's AOO, a commander must comply with the AOO commander's authority. Targeting fires, force tracking, and land management must be in accordance with the direction provided by the AOO commander. SOF units operating within an AOO must keep the AOO commander apprised of locations and recognize that the AOO commander retains authority for establishing fire support coordination measures and clearing fires. The AOO commander and SOF commander should maximize information sharing while recognizing the need to maintain OPSEC.

### **4.4. ALLIED CONVENTIONAL FORCES/ALLIED SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES INTEGRATED OPERATIONS**

#### **4.4.1. General.**

When properly integrated during planning, conventional forces and SOF can capitalize on their inherent strengths to achieve the operational-level commander's intent. Successful conventional force and SOF integration should ideally begin during the early planning stages. Ignoring conventional force and SOF integration issues in planning may introduce operational complexities that either increase risk or mitigate potential complementary effects.

#### **4.4.2. Conventional Forces Supported by Special Operations Forces**

The conventional force commander must recognize that SOF normally operate in small elements and do not possess sufficient combat power to confront enemy forces for a sustained period. However, properly used SOF offer specialized, yet complementary, capabilities to the conventional force commander. To ensure that conventional forces are effectively supported by SOF, operational-level commanders/supporting SOF commanders and their staff:

- a. Bring SOF liaison support early into the planning and coordination process.
- b. Conduct an assessment to determine if the operational mission criteria are met<sup>17</sup>.
- c. Ensure SOF provide input on how they can support the conventional force commander's intent and operation plan.

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<sup>17</sup> See paragraph 1.6.

- d. Recognize the characteristics and capabilities/limitations of each other's forces, including C2/staff capacities, mobility, survivability, firepower, and communications.
- e. Establish clear tactical-level command relationships.

#### **4.4.3. Special Operations Forces Supported by Conventional Forces**

Conventional forces conduct operations to defeat enemy forces and to control land, air, sea, and space, including populations and resources. They possess a variety of capabilities, including a greater number of personnel, which can be used to support SOF in the accomplishment of core tasks. To ensure that SOF are effectively supported by conventional forces, operational-level commanders/supporting component commanders and their staff:

- a. Conduct a feasibility assessment to determine the viability of a proposed mission/target for conventional force employment.
- b. Determine if the tasking is an appropriate use of conventional forces.
- c. Determine if required resources are available.
- d. Bring conventional forces early into the planning and coordination process.
- e. Recognize the characteristics and capabilities/limitations of each other's forces, including C2/staff capacities, mobility, survivability, firepower, and communications.
- f. Establish clear tactical-level command relationships.

#### **4.4.4. Conventional Forces Specialists Supporting Special Operations Forces**

Above and beyond organic assets and CSS elements, SOF may occasionally require support from specialists due to the scope of the tasks related to their mission. For example, when explosive hazard or mobility tasks exceed their integral capabilities, conventional forces may temporarily assign specialists to support them. Normally these specialists will be assigned to non-conventional groupings and specific command relationships. This support is normally required during insertion and extraction but could also be required for other specific parts of SOF missions. This support includes—but is not limited to—medical, counter-CBRN, engineering, logistics, military police, intelligence, component elements (sea, land, air).

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## **CHAPTER 5 – ALLIED SPECIAL OPERATIONS PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

### **5.1. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

A key consideration of special operations planning is that the mission should be planned by the operational force that will execute it.

#### **5.1.1. Operations Security**

The decision to employ SOF may hinge on the need for a rapid, low-prominence response of limited size, scope, and duration. OPSEC measures must be integrated from the first stage of operations planning.

#### **5.1.2. Complete Mission Planning**

Prior to an employment decision, the task should be comprehensively planned and should include development of the profiles for insertion/infiltration, resupply, and extraction/exfiltration of the forces. Emphasis on pre-planning for extraction/exfiltration is critical, because by the time it is required, the speed and means of extraction/exfiltration could offset any loss of the element of surprise, particularly in short-duration operations. Specific employment parameters and coordination procedures should be provided by specialist staffs and included in the relevant campaign and operation plans. Contingency planning should always be an integral part of SOF mission planning, covering procedures for emergency extraction/exfiltration, PR, MEDEVAC, immediate CAS, and any other foreseeable contingency. Also, the rehearsal is considered as an important phase of a special operation and it should be taken into account during the planning process. The nature of the target, adversary and friendly situation, and environmental characteristics of the operational area are key planning factors. There are several factors of special operations mission planning. These include:

#### **5.1.3. Timely Planning**

Timely articulation of how special operations can help achieve the operational-level commander's intent leads to effective utilization of SOF and optimizes use of the military instrument through integration of SOF with conventional forces. However, special operations typically require timely and detailed intelligence and detailed planning, which is why there are normally inviolate requirements to special operations planning periods.

#### **5.1.4. Planning Priorities**

Generally, all targets or mission assignments for SOF should contribute substantially to the strategic and operational objectives, within the lines of the operation being executed.

Limited resources and the extensive planning required dictate that an operational-level commander selectively employs SOF for high priority operations. Further, the sensitivity of many SOF missions may dictate that specific political, legal, time-of-day, geographic, or force size constraints be placed upon the supported and supporting forces.

### **5.1.5. Comprehensive Approach**

SOF should apply a comprehensive approach to planning and recognize that military action alone cannot resolve all crises or conflicts. SOF should be prepared to use broad, multidimensional responses in achieving necessary objectives to reach the end state.

### **5.1.6. Synchronization**

Special operations targeting and mission planning must be coordinated with all participating joint force components and agencies through the appropriate supported/supporting relationship. During an on-going crisis or during major combat operations, synchronization of special operations with conventional targeting and strike response is essential because time for ordnance delivery is extremely limited and may affect SOF mobility corridors, infiltration routes, hide sites, PR, or target areas. Coordination between SOF and conventional force planners must occur during the early planning stages to facilitate synchronization and integration of all assets and allocation of conventional resources to support and augment SOF activities, and vice versa. Special operations mission planning must be supportive of, and supported by, all applicable aspects of the joint force's operational plan.

## **5.2. SOF EMPLOYMENT CONCERNS**

SOF should be primarily employed for critical or decisive objectives. There are limitations to the use of SOF. Improper use of SOF can rapidly lead to unnecessary depletion of SOF capabilities. SOF cannot be easily replaced, nor can their capabilities be rapidly expanded. SOF logistic support is often required in austere locations and their extended sustainment may require innovative logistics solutions. Though SOF operate with conventional forces in the operating environment, SOF should not be employed as a substitute for conventional forces nor in roles for which they have neither the depth to sustain themselves or the specific training.

## **5.3. INTELLIGENCE CONSIDERATIONS**

### **5.3.1. General**

The nature of special operations generally requires INTEL support that is more detailed and time sensitive than that needed by conventional forces. The scope of special operations may require information on the Political, Military, Economic, Social

Infrastructure and Information (PMESII)<sup>18</sup>, and cultural dynamics of the operational environment. To obtain the requisite intelligence support, SOF planners and operators must ensure that both Alliance and national collection analysis and production agencies can be utilized. These INTEL relationships and interfaces should be established in peacetime to facilitate SOF access to the complete range of INTEL available during crisis response operations. Timely, detailed, and fused products are becoming vital as INTEL often drives and/or enables current operations. SOF mission planning incorporates INTEL from national sources, strategic Allied agencies (e.g. NIFC), and self-generated reconnaissance. INTEL sharing procedures amongst Alliance members should be agreed upon and implemented early in the SOCC planning process. Special capabilities, such as linguists, tactical interrogators, materiel exploitation specialists, or liaison personnel, must be considered at the earliest stages of the planning process.

### **5.3.2. Time-Sensitive Nature**

The compressed decision-making cycle under which some special operations missions are planned requires early identification of PIRs to provide focused collection, analysis, and production. The INTEL specialist's participation in the planning process from the onset is critical in formulating PIRs. Moreover, INTEL specialists need to be permanently integrated in planning groups for future operations. The INTEL branch is responsible for the timely management of SOCC staff and component collection requirements and INTEL requests for information.

### **5.3.3. Intelligence Fusion**

The fusion of INTEL from various sources will be accomplished in SOCC J2's ASC. Breaking down barriers for INTEL sharing is crucial in providing critical, timely INTEL to the lowest executing level. It should be facilitated by participation of analysts and representatives of the SOIB, foreign disclosure capabilities, SOTGs, and other INTEL/supporting agencies with access to the theatre and national INTEL architecture, feeds, databases, and reach-back capabilities with appropriate protocols for disclosure of INTEL to partners.

## **5.4. INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

A comprehensive and systemic understanding of the information environment (IE) is required to effectively identify opportunities and risks resulting from SOF actions. This understanding is derived from knowledge development across the PMESII spectrum (including traditional all-source INTEL and available open source INTEL from a wide variety of unclassified military and civilian sources), and subsequent analysis of audiences, their social context and bias, objectives, centres of gravity, critical themes, information

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<sup>18</sup> The engagement space, as relevant part of the strategic environment, can be initially viewed through several conceptual models. The most common in NATO are the six PMESII domains listed above.

systems, and media. Analysis and assessment of the IE should be continuously updated and refined to ensure that military information activities are applied to maximize their effect.

## **5.5. TARGETING CONSIDERATIONS**

### **5.5.1. General.**

The aim of targeting is to create a desired effect upon the adversary and may be accomplished using lethal or non-lethal means. SOF must participate fully in all aspects of the targeting process at all levels in order to ensure the coordination of SOF tasks as they greatly assist in the operational-level commander's targeting effort.

### **5.5.2. Basic process.**

Targets may be nominated by any level. The SOCC commander may consolidate and validate his own nomination of targets to ensure that they do not conflict with the restricted and no-strike target lists before sending these targets to his SOF representative of the joint targeting coordination board (JTCCB). The JTCCB fuses all component nominations, reviews all targets to ensure compliance with the operational-level commander's current guidance and objectives, and prioritizes targets and assigns them to the best available/most suitable engagement assets. Nominated and prioritized targets will be presented to the JFHQ's JTCCB for validation via a target nomination list and the draft of the joint prioritized target list respectively. These lists are formally validated by the operational-level commander as an annex to the joint coordination order. Once targets are validated and assigned to the SOCC, INTEL production managers will enhance and analyse the data available in the target folder, tailoring it to the needs of the tactical element that will execute the mission. During the mission planning phase, the tactical element refines its concept of operations against the designated target and executes the mission following the mission execute order.

### **5.5.3. Time-Sensitivity of Targets**

- a. Time-sensitivity can play an important part in categorizing a target and determining its appropriateness as a special operations target.
- b. A target is time-sensitive when it requires an immediate response because it poses (or will soon pose) a danger to friendly forces or is a highly lucrative, fleeting target of opportunity and the engagement is of high enough priority to warrant immediate action in order to support the campaign objectives.
- c. Significant SOF contributions against time-sensitive targets are discreet and/or covert reconnaissance, surveillance, and terminal guidance missions, and control of weapons systems. If required, SOF can be employed to destroy, disable, or otherwise affect a time-sensitive target.

#### 5.5.4. Methodology

SOF often target key individuals and networks with kinetic and/or non-kinetic means, using an array of organic or available human and technical enablers. SOF use all available intelligence (e.g. human intelligence - HUMINT, signals intelligence-SIGINT, measurement and signature intelligence-MASINT and open source intelligence-OSINT) and JISR assets to find and fix a target, then various methods to finish it. Subsequently, SOF rapidly exploit the target with technical equipment and tactical procedures in order to develop follow-on targets. The SOF targeting methodology is described further in Annex B.

#### 5.6. COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT CONSIDERATIONS

- a. Effective CSS is fundamental to the success of special operations and must be an integral part of operations planning. It should address logistic support, supplies, infrastructure, deployment, reception, staging, and onward movement of forces, transportation, sustainment, maintenance, and medical support<sup>19</sup>. SOF operating within adversary-controlled territory cannot expect normal sustainment; therefore, SOTGs are expected to be self-sufficient. Common usage supply items, such as food, water, fuel, and ammunition, will be provided in accordance with the established procedures for the mission and the technical agreements with the SOF FN. SOF may operate theatre-wide in small elements often apart from established logistics support areas. The SOCC, therefore, may have to obtain host-nation support (HNS)<sup>20</sup> agreements, contractor support to operations, and tailored support arrangements. Resupply of deployed SOF elements in remote or denied areas is planned and executed as operational tasks and frequently requires the use of SOF aviation assets.
- b. For successful and well-coordinated logistic support of SOF units, the following considerations should be applied accordingly:
  - (1) **National Support.** The logistic support of SOF units is the responsibility of the troop contributing nation, except where otherwise provided for by HNS agreements or other directives or agreements.
  - (2) **Multinational Support.** SOF missions could require multinational logistic planning and execution. In this case, a joint logistic support

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<sup>19</sup> The SOCC collocates normally with operational-level commands and relies on their services for real life support as well as medical support, beyond role 1.

<sup>20</sup> See MC 334/2, NATO Principles and Policies for Host Nation Support, and AJP-4.5(B), Allied Joint Doctrine for Host Nation Support.

group will coordinate theatre-level logistics for a larger joint force. The logistic support for SOF units is coordinated through the SOCC. Operations planning will determine the specific logistic requirements and the associated logistic C2 structures for each operation. SOF also have special support considerations such as operating outside of normal theatre support areas and security-related issues.

- (3) **Medical Support.** This will rely heavily on an organic first response capability provided mostly by Special Operations Combat Medics. Moreover, the short response times expected of SOF will require robust medical force protection measures to be maintained. Special operations will require a deployed medical support capability with similar agility to the supported force, with high mobility and a limited deployed footprint. This will normally be based on a role 1 medical treatment facility providing primary healthcare, specialized first aid, triage, and resuscitation. Additional skills such as damage control surgery, preventive medicine, and CBRN treatment will be provided by small specialized teams supporting the role 1 treatment facility. The challenging SOF environment will require specially trained medical providers, regularly training and operating with SOF. These providers may need specific national authorizations to perform treatments and procedures outside their normal scope of practice due to the independent nature of SOF. Due to the nature of the operations and limited deployed footprint, well-defined evacuation routes and procedures will also be required. This requires special attention be paid to the ability of MEDEVAC/CASEVAC to reach the next higher level of medical treatment in a timely manner. Therefore the respective timelines of medical treatment are key constraints.

- c. **Statement of Requirements.** Logistic execution and requirements determination begin with the receipt of the mission and subsequent analysis. Requirements determination is critical to coordinating theatre support. The most important aspect of the statement of requirements process is identification of requirements in sufficient time to allow for the necessary coordination, planning and funding.

## 5.7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Because special operations frequently involve a unique set of complex and sensitive issues, SOF commanders must seek legal review during all levels of planning and execution of missions at all levels. Legal advisors have to be available throughout all the phases of planning and execution of an operation. Legal advisors have to be properly

trained not only in the respective fields of law, but also in the applicable military planning procedures.

## **5.8. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS**

- a. Special operations significantly influence the perception of NATO, not only within the crisis area but also worldwide. Consequently, most SOF missions will create certain effects in the information environment and will likely attract the scrutiny of local and international media and publics, prior, during, and after the operations. Almost any aspect of NATO operations and issues can or will be reported to a global audience in near-real time.
- b. NATO strategic communications is the coordinated and appropriate use of NATO communications activities and capabilities—such as public diplomacy, public affairs, military public affairs, information operations, and psychological operations—as appropriate, in support of Alliance policies, operations, and activities, and in order to advance NATO's aims.
- c. The strategic communications aspects should be inherent in the planning and conduct of SOF operations and activities, in order to preserve not only OPSEC but also to avoid undesired effects caused by SOF in the information environment.
- d. The operational-level commander is responsible for strategic communications at the operational level. SOF must ensure they are nested into the operational strategic communication plan.

## **5.9. COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS CONSIDERATIONS**

- a. NATO is responsible for the extension of secure and non-secure C2 services, including CIS connectivity down to and including the component command in theatre. The nation appointed FN of the SOCC is responsible for providing internal C2 services and to extend them to the highest level of command of all assigned, attached, and supporting elements (e.g. SOTGs, SOATGs, SOAC, etc). The SOCC is also responsible to ensure that C2 services are provided to all liaison teams. Nations are responsible for providing their own internal C2 services.
- b. Provisioning of C2 services requires providing secure CIS connectivity for protection of sensitive information, whenever required. When secure CIS is provided within a national unit, secure connectivity should be provided down to all directly subordinated levels for interface purposes. Secure and non-secure CIS should include provisions data and fax capability. TCNs should consider tactical satellite communications as an invaluable means of establishing this C2 and implementing the required security measures.

- c. **Battlefield Information Collection and Exploitation System (BICES).** BICES is the NATO network used by the NATO SOF community in order to provide a NATO interoperable, secure communications mechanism for all levels of SOF coordination. BICES provides secure voice, data, and video services up to NATO SECRET for collaboration and INTEL sharing at strategic, operational, and tactical levels.

## ANNEX A - LEVELS OF ALLIED SOF CAPABILITIES<sup>21</sup>

### A.1. SPECIAL OPERATIONS LAND TASK GROUP (SOLTG)

SPECIAL OPERATIONS LAND TASK GROUP (SOLTG)	
<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<p><b>General:</b> Capable of conducting the essential staff area functions, commanding and controlling subordinate SOTUs, CS and CSS units, being able to deploy in support of joint NATO operations in accordance with established deployment (10 days) timelines with all classes of supply and establishing liaison element on the appropriate level.</p> <p><b>SR:</b> Capable of conducting environmental reconnaissance, threat assessment, target assessment, post-strike reconnaissance for extended periods with minimal external support, conducting optical surveillance of targets by day and night, and in adverse weather conditions, recce/establish landing sites.</p> <p><b>DA:</b> Capable of conducting raids, ambushes, and direct assaults which involve attacking critical and crucial targets, interdicting of lines of communication or other target systems, capturing designated personnel or materiel, seizing, destroying, or neutralizing adversary facilities or capabilities.</p> <p><b>MA:</b> Capable of providing SOF partner and liaison teams to train and advise indigenous host nation security forces.</p>

<sup>21</sup> These levels are used to describe NATO's Minimum Capabilities Requirements (2011) and Bi SC Agreed Capabilities Codes & Capabilities Statements (2011).

<b>SPECIAL OPERATIONS LAND TASK GROUP (SOLTG)</b>	
<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<p><b>General:</b> As a prerequisite to reach level 2, the minimum capabilities of level 1 have to be accomplished. Capable of employing, as a minimum, the key enablers such as Air/Aviation, Joint Fires, ISR, and TEO/biometrics capabilities placed in direct support and/or attached to the SOLTG.</p> <p><b>SR:</b> Capable of conducting surveillance of a target using remote sensors and optics, conducting surveillance of a target using persistent ISR (e.g. unmanned aerial vehicles).</p> <p><b>DA:</b> Capable of conducting air terminal control tasks to NATO standards, directing terminal guidance control of precision guided munitions.</p> <p><b>MA:</b> Capable of providing SOF partner and liaison teams to train, advise, and equip indigenous host nation security forces.</p>
<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<p><b>General:</b> As a prerequisite to reach level 3, the minimum capabilities of level 2 have to be accomplished. Capable of employing organic Air/Aviation, ISR assets, and TEO/biometrics capabilities.</p> <p><b>SR:</b> Capable of conducting CBRN recce using accredited metering system, conducting SIGINT gathering operations.</p> <p><b>DA:</b> Capable of conducting recovery operations, precision destruction operations, squadron/company level manoeuvre operations using integral tactical mobility and support weapons.</p> <p><b>MA:</b> Capable of providing SOF partner and liaison teams to train, advise, equip, and support indigenous host nation security forces.</p>

## A.2. SPECIAL OPERATIONS MARITIME TASK GROUP SOMTG

<b>SPECIAL OPERATIONS MARITIME TASK GROUP (SOMTG)</b>	
<b>Note:</b> <i>An SOMTG has to meet the level 1 requirements of an SOLTG. Additionally the below listed capabilities are required.</i>	
<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<p><b>General:</b> Capable of conducting the essential staff area functions, commanding and controlling subordinated SOTUs, CS, and CSS units, being able to deploy in support of joint NATO operations in accordance with established deployment (10 days) timelines with all classes of supply and establishing liaison element on the appropriate level.</p> <p><b>SR:</b> Capable of conducting overt, covert, and discreet (underwater delivery) SR mission (e.g. over the beach, over the horizon, beach obstacle and explosive ordnance disposal recce) using handheld equipment, in the coastal, riverine and maritime environments, by air, land, or sea, inclusive underwater operations.</p> <p><b>DA:</b> Capable of conducting raids, ambushes, and direct assaults in the coastal, riverine and maritime environments, and opposed boarding operations in case of non-compliance with internationally agreed shipping procedures, using low prominence techniques by air, land, or sea, inclusive underwater operations.</p> <p><b>MA:</b> Capable of providing SOF partner and liaison teams to train and advise indigenous host nation security forces.</p>
<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<p><b>General:</b> As a prerequisite to reach level 2 , the minimum capabilities of level 1 have to be accomplished. Capable of employing, as a minimum, the key enablers such as Air/Aviation, Joint Fires, ISR, and TEO/biometrics capabilities placed in direct support and/or attached to the SOMTG.</p> <p><b>SR:</b> Capable of conducting amphibious advance force reconnaissance using technical systems and profile recorders based on advanced differential global positioning systems.</p> <p><b>DA:</b> Capable of conducting combat swimming operations using closed circuit breathing apparatus with man-pack explosive devices employing delayed fuse system, conducting swimming operations using swimmer delivery systems to enhance range and weapon payloads.</p> <p><b>MA:</b> Capable of providing SOF partner and liaison teams to train, advise, and equip indigenous host nation security forces.</p>

<b>SPECIAL OPERATIONS MARITIME TASK GROUP (SOMTG)</b>	
<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<p><b>General:</b> As a prerequisite to reach level 3, the minimum capabilities of level 2 have to be accomplished. Capable of employing organic Air/Aviation, ISR assets and TEO/biometrics capabilities.</p> <p><b>SR:</b> Capable of conducting amphibious advance force reconnaissance either remotely or without using surface swimming, using technical systems based on advanced differential GPS or inertial navigation systems.</p> <p><b>DA:</b> Capable of conducting offensive maritime attack/interdiction operations from Fast Attack Craft with support weapons and/or standoff weapon systems.</p> <p><b>MA:</b> Capable of providing SOF partner and liaison teams to train, advise, equip, and support indigenous host nation security forces.</p>

### A.3. SPECIAL OPERATIONS AIR TASK GROUP (SOLTG)

<b><u>SPECIAL OPERATIONS AIR TASK GROUP(SOATG)</u></b>	
<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<p><b>General:</b> Capable of providing C2 to plan, coordinate, support, and direct the activities of multiple SOATUs with differing capabilities and integrate them into theatre air, land, and maritime operations.</p> <p><b>SR:</b> Capable of covert infiltration/resupply/exfiltration of SOF, through habitual working relationships, to austere/unprepared locations in militarily and politically sensitive environments, using low prominence techniques.</p> <p><b>DA:</b> Capable of infiltration and exfiltration of SOF, through habitual working relationships, to austere/unprepared/opposed locations/vessels in militarily and politically sensitive environments, using low prominence techniques.</p> <p><b>MA:</b> Capable of providing the full range of DA and SR Aviation operations, through habitual working relationships, in support of other SOF units providing MA to indigenous host nation security forces.</p>
<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<p><b>General:</b> As a prerequisite to reach level 2 , the minimum capabilities of level 1 have to be accomplished. Capable of providing Liaison Officers for CJFACC.</p> <p><b>SR:</b> Capable of utilizing airborne ISR assets in aviation platforms not dedicated to ISR.</p> <p><b>DA:</b> Capable of providing limited fire support to SOF from airborne platforms. This may include airborne sniper operations or small calibre weapons up to .50 cal.</p> <p><b>MA:</b> Capable of providing specialized SOF Aviation MA to friendly/partnered aviation assets in both flying and activities in support of flying operations.</p>

<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<p><b>General:</b> As a prerequisite to reach level 3, the minimum capabilities of level 2 have to be accomplished. Capable of acting as core of CJSOAC in addition to level 1 and 2 capabilities.</p> <p><b>SR:</b> Capable of having dedicated ISR platforms for SOF with ground controllers with habitual relationships with other Special Operations Ground/Air/Maritime forces.</p> <p><b>DA:</b> Capable of providing full spectrum fire support to SOF. This includes all stages of Find, Fix, Finish with weapon systems exceeding .50 cal.</p> <p><b>MA:</b> Capable of having dedicated MA airmen with foreign language skills, capable of providing SOF Aviation MA to friendly/partnered aviation assets in both flying and activities in support of flying operations.</p>
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**ANNEX B – ALLIED SOF TARGETING**

B.1. Component commanders and their staff may use different processes like the Decide, Detect, Deliver, Assess (D3A) process to interact with the joint targeting cycle managed by the operational command. Throughout, the process is dependent on the clear direction and guidance of the operational commander to the component commander and is particularly suitable where component commanders have been given responsibility for an area of operations and a degree of autonomy in the conduct of their operations. For SOF it can be summarized as follows:

- a. The SOCC implements a comprehensive approach which advocates that all actors, military and non-military, be considered during the course of action development. In this context, the SOCC ensures that the effects of kinetic and/or non-kinetic actions are considered logically with an understanding of how those actions affect the targeted and non-targeted actors. It can be detrimental to leap directly into the hard targeting process of find, fix, finish, exploit, analyse, and disseminate (F3EAD), particularly in a theatre dominated by unconventional warfare (Fig B-1).

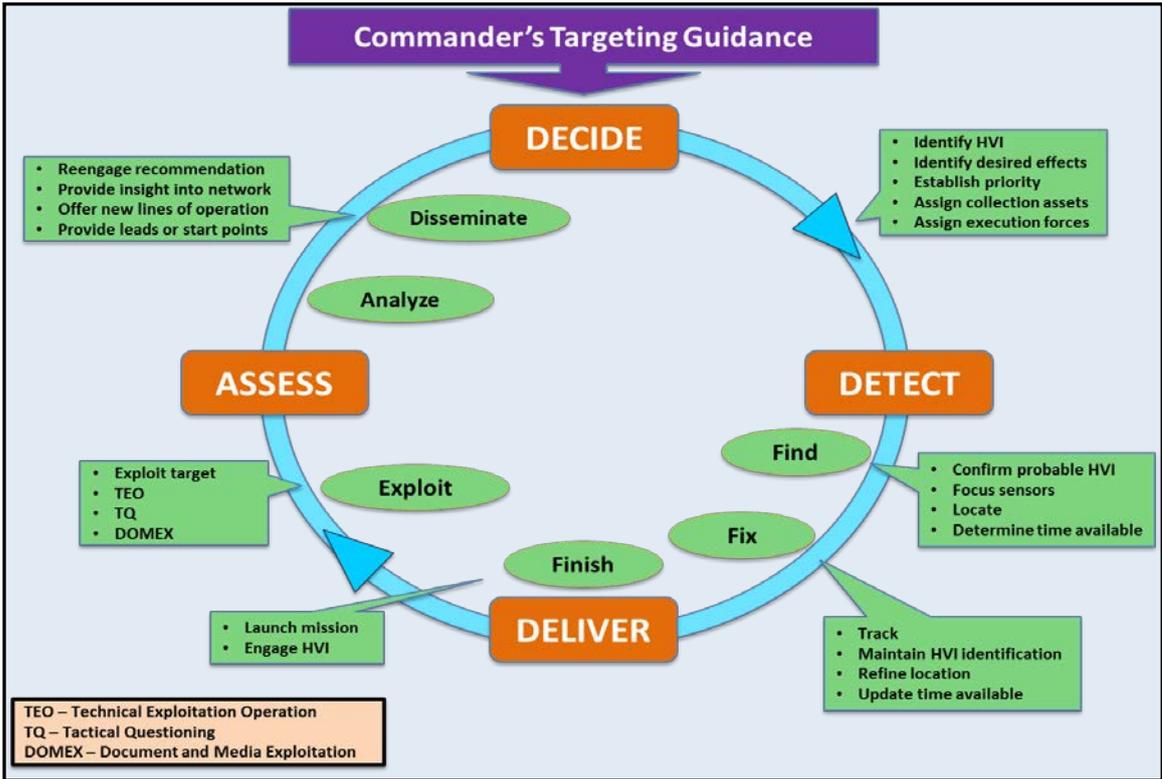


Figure B-1. High-value Individual Targeting Process (F3EAD Cycle) within D3A

- b. The SOCC develops a true understanding of the operational environment and maps out all the friendly, non-friendly and undecided actors at play. Without the knowledge of how all of these elements work, how they are linked, and the relationship that one has to another, it is impossible to determine the true effect of potential operations. Fundamental to this process is the requirement to conduct detailed threat network and target analysis. There are various tools and methods that can be utilized in order to develop this picture.
- c. A tool is contained within the process of find, feel, understand, influence, and disrupt (F2UID):

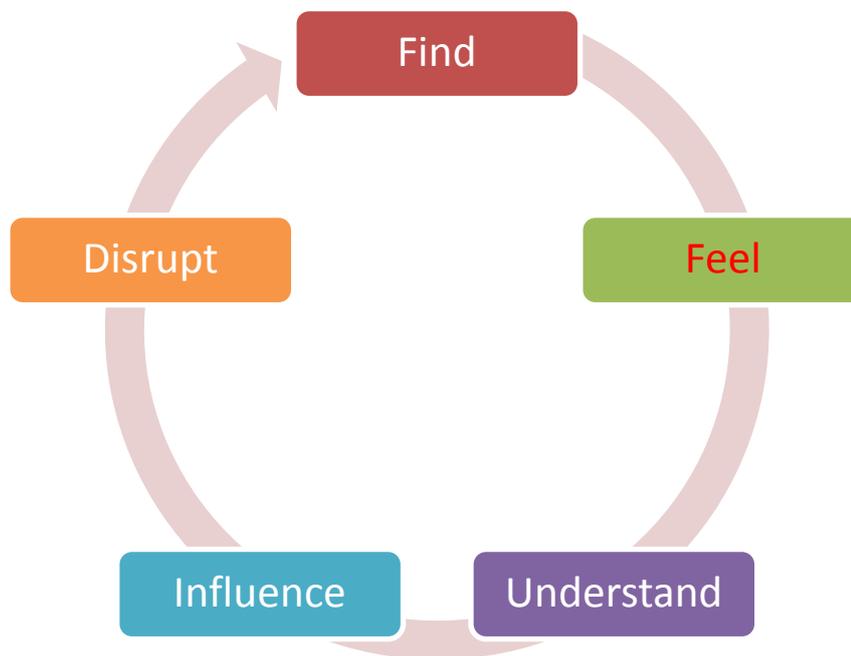


Figure B-2. F2UID Cycle

- d. This is not a quick process. Time and resources must be invested in order to ensure the relevance of information and products. If the process is done successfully, the overall level of operational effectiveness may be greatly improved.
- e. F2UID is a tool which can be utilized at various SOF levels to develop a picture and to describe the operational environment. It provides the baseline understanding of the indigenous population and the complex network of connections forced by family, tribes, economics, crime, and internal conflict. Once the information is displayed and processed, it allows the user to

develop ways to influence and disrupt the target through kinetic or non-kinetic means using the F3EAD targeting process. This cycle relates to the concept that the targeting process is intelligence driven, but command led. The cycle needs to be continuously reviewed and refocused to coordinate with operational developments, operational intent, and updated PIRs. The F2UID cycle can be seen as a rigorous cultural intelligence model. All available sources must be used and addressed in order to build a comprehensive picture of the AOO/area of responsibility.

- f. The vital link between intelligence and operations in effects based targeting assures that well informed decisions based on the F2UID process are leading to a potential high tempo F3EAD process targeting high value individuals or entire threat networks which are mainly dynamic or even time sensitive by nature.
  - g. To achieve the desired results, time must be spent utilizing all available intelligence and information sources (civilian and military) to build a multi-layered picture of the operating environment. Only then can SOF truly determine the effect they are going to create.
  - h. The SOCC must ensure that the effects on targets complement or support strategic and operational objectives. This requires a predictive approach to ensure that the follow-on effects are anticipated and fully considered. It also may require effects to be mitigated prior to, during, and after mission execution. The ability to analyse second and third order effects is essential to evaluating measures of effectiveness as part of the assessment phase of targeting.
  - i. Target prioritization is required to take place at all levels of operational activity. Key to the process is that each level of prioritization can be linked back to operational objectives outlined in the operations plan or supporting plan. Unless a target can be defined in relation to these objectives, it is difficult to justify and is unlikely to be selected for approval by the appropriate authority.
- B.2. Further details of the above mentioned processes and a more detailed description of the SOF specific targeting tools are described in the NSHQ SOF Targeting Manual.

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## LEXICON

### PART I – ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAR	air-to-air refuelling
ACO	Allied Command Operations
AJP	allied joint publication
ALI	air land integration
AOO	area of operations
AOR	area of responsibility
ASC	all-source cell
AT	air transport
ATP	allied tactical publication
BICES	battlefield information collection and exploitation system
C2	command and control
C2IS	command and control information system
CAS	close air support
CBRN	chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear
CCA	close combat attack
CIS	communication and information systems
COIN	counter-insurgency
CS	combat support
CSS	combat service support
CT	counterterrorism
DA	direct action
FN	framework nation
F2UID	find, feel, understand, influence, and disrupt
F3EAD	find, fix, finish, exploit, analyse, and disseminate
HNS	host-nation support
HQ	headquarters
HUMINT	human intelligence

ICI	Istanbul Cooperation Initiative
IE	information environment
ISR	intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance
J1	personnel staff branch
J2	intelligence staff branch
J6	communications staff branch
J8	financial staff branch
JFHQ	joint force headquarters
JISR	joint intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance
JOA	joint operations area
JSOA	joint special operations area
JTCB	joint targeting coordination board
MA	military assistance
MASINT	measurement and signature intelligence
MC	military committee
MD	Mediterranean Dialogue
MEDEVAC	medical evacuation
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NIFC	NATO Intelligence Fusion Centre
NRF	NATO Response Force
NSHQ	NATO Special Operations Headquarters
OPCOM	operational command
OPCON	operational control
OPSEC	operations security
OSINT	open source intelligence
PIR	priority intelligence requirement
PMESII	political, military, economic, social infrastructure and information
PR	personnel recovery

SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander Europe
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
SIGINT	signals intelligence
SOAC	special operations air command
SOATG	special operations air task group
SOATU	special operations air task unit
SOCC	special operations component command
SOCCE	special operations command and control element
SOF	special operations forces
SOIB	Special Operations Intelligence Branch
SOLE	special operations liaison element
SOPLE	special operations planning and liaison element
SOTG	special operations task group
SOTU	special operations task unit
SR	special reconnaissance and surveillance
TACON	tactical control
TCN	troop contributing nation
TEO	technical exploitation operations
WMD	weapons of mass destruction

## PART II – TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

### **clandestine operation**

An operation planned or conducted in such a way as to assure its secrecy or concealment. (AAP-6)

### **counter-insurgency (COIN)**

Comprehensive civilian and military efforts made to defeat an insurgency and to address any core grievances. (AAP-6)

### **counterterrorism (CT)**

All offensive measures taken to neutralize terrorism before and after hostile acts are carried out. Note: Such measures include those counterforce activities justified for the defence of individuals as well as containment measures implemented by military forces or civilian organizations. (AAP-6)

### **covert operation**

An operation that is planned and conducted so as to conceal the identity or permit plausible deniability of the executor. (AAP-6)

### **direct action**

A short-duration strike or other small-scale offensive action by special operations forces or special operations-capable units to seize, destroy, capture, recover or inflict damage to achieve specific, well-defined and often time-sensitive results. (AAP-6)

### **exfiltration**

The removal of personnel or units from areas under hostile control by stealth, deception, surprise, or clandestine means. (AAP-6)

### **extraction**

The removal of forces from a hostile or potentially hostile area. (AAP-6)

### **infiltration**

A technique and process in which a force moves as individuals or small groups over, through or around enemy positions without detection. (AAP-6)

### **insertion**

The introduction of forces into a hostile or potentially hostile area. (AAP-6)

### **overt operation**

An operation conducted openly, without concealment. (AAP-6)

**raid**

An operation, usually small scale, involving a swift penetration of hostile territory to secure information, confuse the enemy, or destroy his installations. It ends with a planned withdrawal upon completion of the assigned mission. (AAP-6)

**special operations**

Military activities conducted by specially designated, organized, selected, trained and equipped forces using unconventional techniques and modes of employment. (AAP-6)

**special reconnaissance and surveillance**

Reconnaissance and surveillance activities conducted by special operations forces, which complement theatre intelligence assets and systems by obtaining strategic and/or operational information. These are human intelligence operations, conducted independently or in support of conventional operations, which may use special techniques, equipment, methods or indigenous assets. (AAP-6)

**technical exploitation operations**

Operations which include the collection and processing of biometric, document and media exploitation and forensic data, recovered from tactical objectives as well as from opportunistic collection efforts supporting force protection and situational awareness requirements, in diverse operational areas. (This definition is used only for this publication.)

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## REFERENCE PUBLICATIONS

MC 133/4	NATO's Operations Planning
MC 324/2	The NATO Military Command Structure (NCS)
MC 326/3	NATO Principles and Policies for Medical Support
MC 334/2	NATO Principles and Policies for Host Nation Support
MC 437/2	Special Operations Policy
MC 526	Logistics Support Concept for NATO Response Force (NRF) Operations
MC 582	NATO Joint Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (JISR) Concept
MC 586/1	MC Policy for Allied Forces and Their Use for Operations
MC 590	NATO Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear Reach Back and Fusion Concept
C-M 00271	NATO's Policy Guidelines on Counter-Terrorism
AAP-6	NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions
AAP-15	NATO Glossary of Abbreviations
AAP-47(A)	Allied Joint Doctrine Development
AJP-01(D)	Allied Joint Doctrine
AJP-2.3	Allied Joint Doctrine for Human Intelligence (HUMINT)
AJP-3(B)	Allied Joint Doctrine for the Conduct of Operations
AJP-3.4.4	Allied Joint Doctrine for Counterinsurgency (COIN)
AJP-3.9	Allied Joint Doctrine for Joint Targeting
AJP-4.10(A)	Allied Joint Medical Support Doctrine
AJP-4.5(B)	Allied Joint Doctrine for Host Nation Support
AJP-4.6(A)	Multinational Joint Logistic Centre (MJLC) Doctrine
ATP-8(B) Vol I	Doctrine for Amphibious Operations
ATP-71	Allied Maritime Interdiction Operations
STANAG 5048	The Minimum Scale of Connectivity for Communications and Information Systems for NATO Land Forces
AD 80-70	Campaign Synchronization and Joint Targeting in ACO
AD 83-1	Medical Support to Operations
NATO Crisis Response System Manual	
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Bi-SC Agreed Capability Codes and Capability Statements	
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NATO's Minimum Capabilities Requirements	
ACO Forces Standards (AFS) Volume X, Special Operations Forces	
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Headquarters and Units Evaluation (SOFEVAL)	



**AJP-3.5(A)(1)**